

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00

EB-07 FAA-00 H-02 L-03 IO-13 NSC-05 PRS-01 MCT-01

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

EO 11652 NA

TAGS: PFOR EAIR US YO

SUBJ: TWA HIJACKING -- ZAGREB PRESS REACTION

REF: ZAGREB 772

1. CLOSE READING OF ZAGREB PRESS CONTINUES TO INDICATE SOME DIFFERENCES IN PRESS COVERAGE OF TWA HIJACKING. BORBA HAS BEEN SHARPER IN ITS CRITICISM OF US ACTIONS DURING HIJACKING, AND VJESNIK, WHILE CARRYING CRITICAL TANJUG ARTICLES, HAS PROVIDED BROADER VIEW OF INCIDENT IN ARTICLES BY NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT.

2. THIS PATTERN IS EVIDENT IN COMPARING SEPTEMBER 14 BORBA AND VJESNIK. BOTH PAPERS CARRIED TANJUG ARTICLE CONTRASTING DECISIVE ACTION OF FRENCH WITH ALLEGED US WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE. BORBA GOES FURTHER IN ANOTHER ARTICLE ENTITLED "REACTION IN US" AND STRONGLY CRITICIZES US MEDIA FOR FAILING TO MENTION OR SEEK EXPLANATION FOR ALLEGED CHANGE IN US POLICY OF REFUSING
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TO NEGOTIATE WITH TERRORISTS. VJESNIK, HOWEVER, IN

ARTICLES BY NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT AGAIN PROVIDES
DIFFERENT SLANT ON REACTION IN US TO HIJACKING.

3. VJESNIK ARTICLE DISCUSSES BACKGROUND OF HIJACKERS
AND THEIR MANIFESTO. ARTICLE THEN NOTES THAT MOST
AMERICANS, INCLUDING THOSE IN MEDIA, KNOW LITTLE ABOUT
THESE THINGS, AND NOW QUOTE THE PROUD NAME OF CROATIA
WILL BE EQUATED FOR A LONG TIME IN THE UNITED
STATES WITH TERRORISM UNQUOTE. IN JUDGING REACTION
OF US MEDIA, ARTICLE STATES THAT EVEN IF NEWSPAPERS HAVE
GIVEN THE HIJACKERS PUBLICITY FOR COMMERCIAL AND NOT
POLITICAL REASONS, EVIL DONE IS NO LESS GREAT. ARTICLE
CONCLUDES BY NOTING THAT WHOLE CASE WILL BE BROUGHT TO
LEGAL CONCLUSION, BUT QUOTE SOME OF THE DAMAGE WHICH
THIS TERRORISTIC SHOW BUSINESS HAS DONE TO YUGOSLAV-
AMERICAN RELATIONS AND THE NAME OF CROATIA WILL TAKE MORE
TIME TO REPAIR, AND MENDING RELATIONS WILL REQUIRE MORE
UNDERSTANDING AND TRUTH THAN IS NOW THE CASE UNQUOTE.

4. VJESNIK ALSO PUBLISHED STATEMENT OF STATE DEPARTMENT
SPOKESMAN WHO NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO BASIS FOR YUGOSLAV
COMPLAINTS ABOUT US ACTION SINCE PASSENGERS WERE FREED
AND HIJACKERS ARRESTED. BORBA DOES NOT CARRY THIS ITEM.
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